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32 PAGES
MEDIEVAL
SPAWN
AND
WITCHBLADE

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MEDIEVAL SPAWN AND WITCHBLADE

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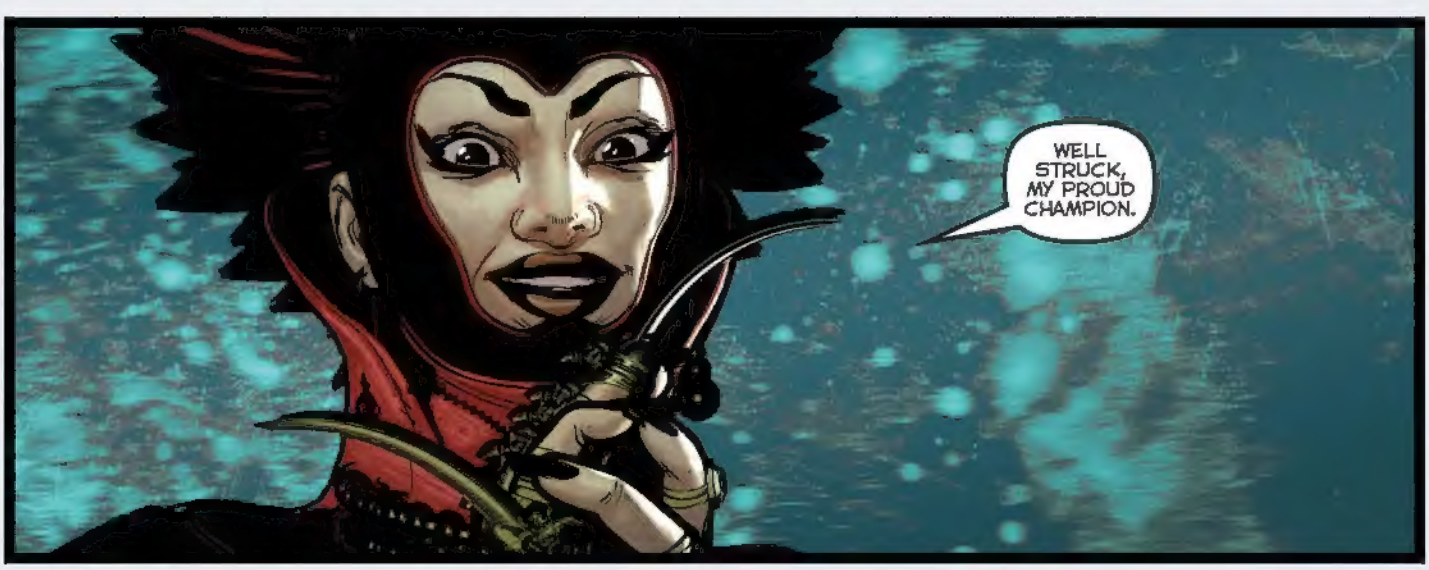
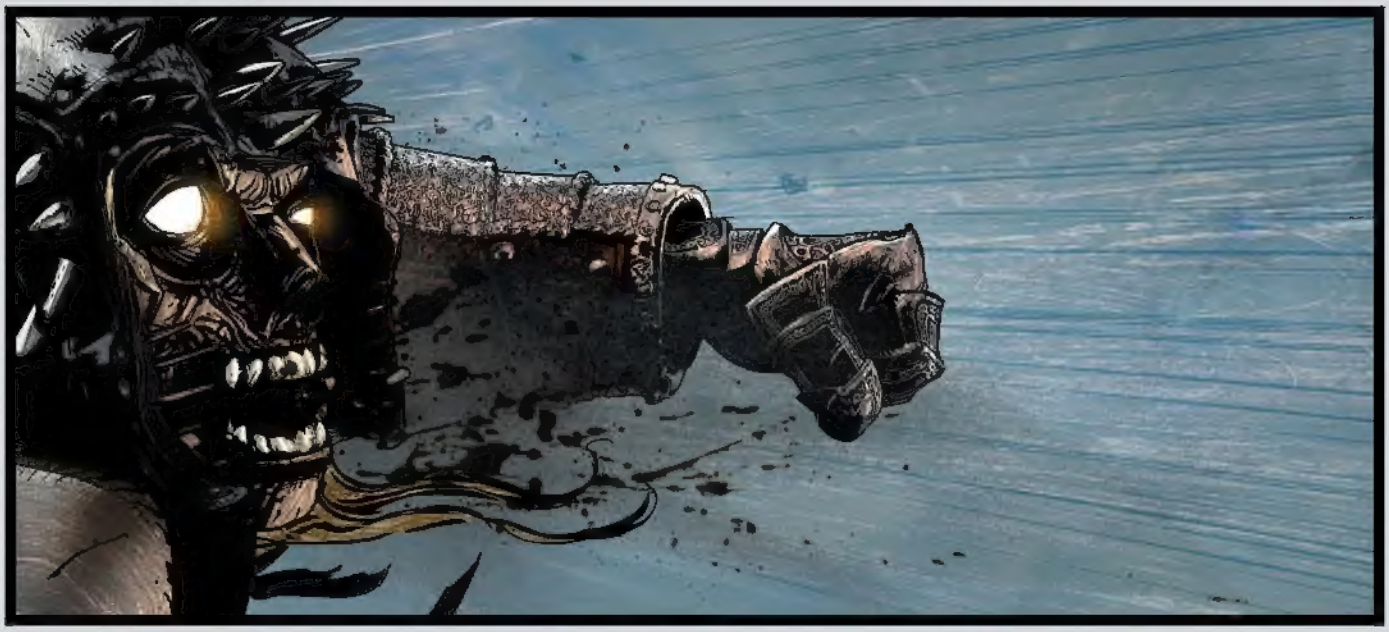
TWO WARRIORS MEET IN MORTAL COMBAT ONE FIGHTS FOR THE LANDS HE BELIEVES ARE HIS TO DEFEND AND FOR THE PEOPLE WHO LOOK TO HIM AS THEIR SAVIOR.
THE OTHER FIGHTS BECAUSE ALL HE KNOWS, ALL HE REMEMBERS, IS COMBAT AND DEATH AND THE TWISTED, CORRUPTED LOVE HE ONCE HAD FOR THE WOMAN HE CALLS HIS QUEEN.

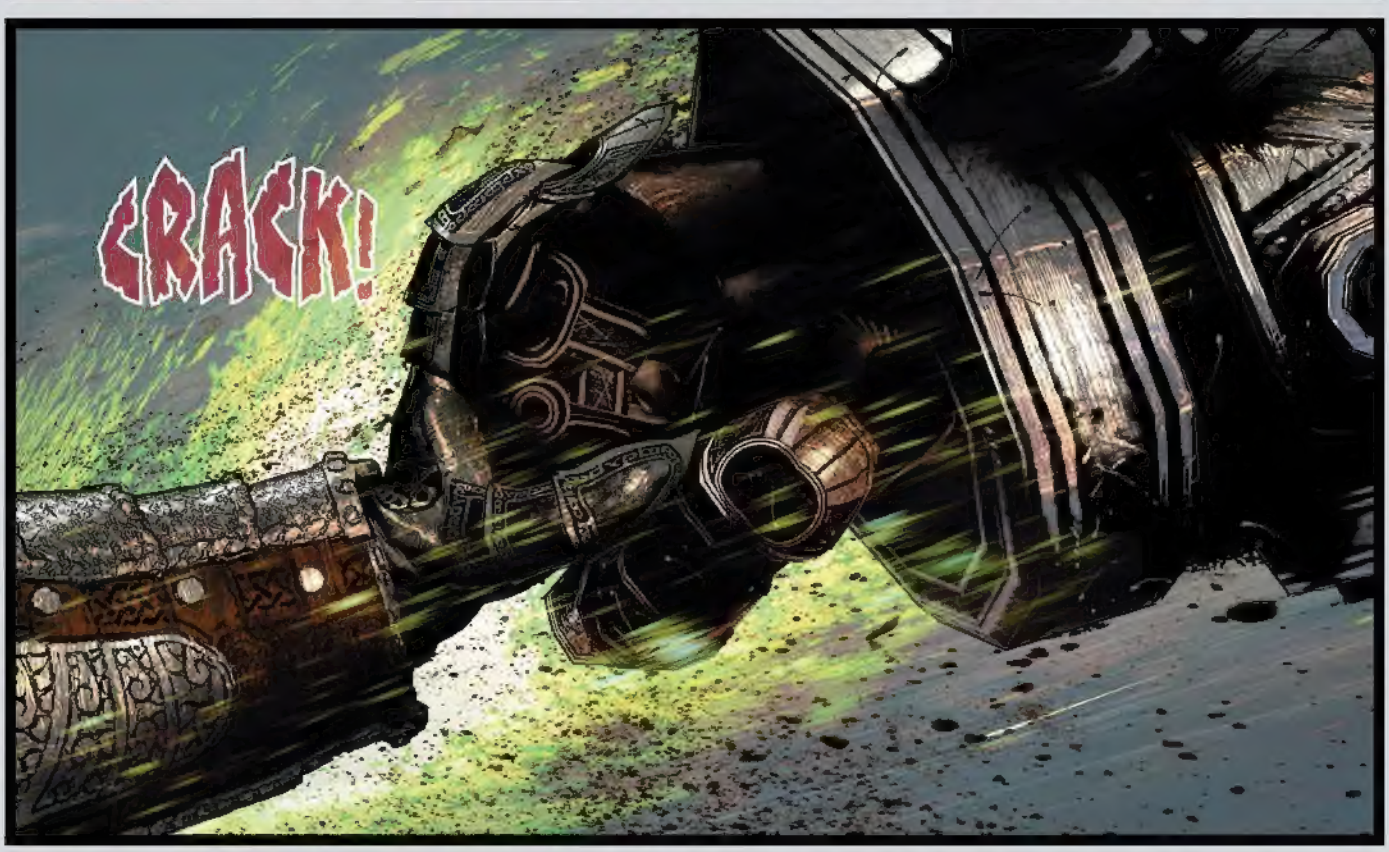

WELL STRUCK, MY PROUD CHAMPION.

YOUR SO-CALLED KING IS BEATEN WITH ONE BLOW FROM THE HAND OF SCOURGE!
I GIVE YOU A CHOICE. RUN BACK TO YOUR HOMES LIKE WHIPPED CURS, YOUR TAILS BETWEEN YOUR LEGS...
...OR STAY TO FACE ME, AND BURN IN THE ICE-COLD FLAMES OF MY VENGEANCE!
THEY DON'T LACK COURAGE BUT WITH THEIR KING SO EASILY DEFEATED HOW COULD THIS ARMY OF PEASANT FARMERS HOPE TO STAND AGAINST SUCH A MONSTER?
'TIS SORCERY. I DIDN'T JOIN UP FOR THIS.
WHERE IS KING VALON? IS HE TRULY VANQUISHED?

MY LIEGE, THANK THE GODS YOU LIVE.
YOU MUST RETURN TO THE BATTLE. THAT MONSTER WILL SLAUGHTER OUR MEN.
ALL RIGHT, BOY. GIVE ME A MOMENT TO GATHER MY WITS.
I SWORE TO PROTECT THESE PEOPLE AND PROTECT THEM I SHALL, TO THE LAST DROP OF MY BLOOD...
YOU DARE TO RAISE THAT BLADE AGAINST ME?
PREPARE TO DIE!



WHAM!
THAT SWORD WAS FORGED TO BRING THE PEACE THAT COMES WITH DEATH TO THE ENEMIES OF THIS LAND.
YOU ARE NOT WORTHY TO WIELD IT!


CRACK!

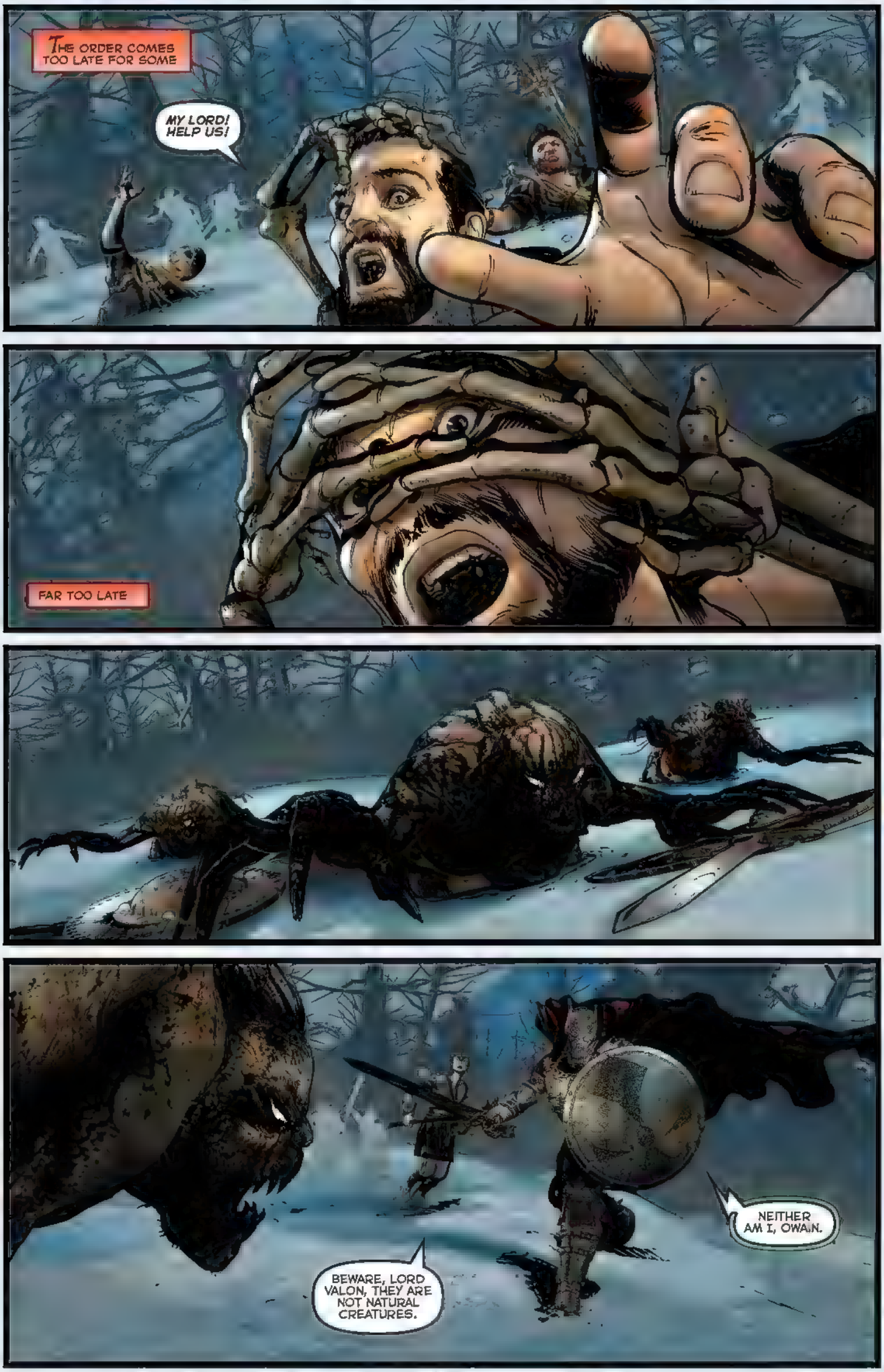
There is a troubling familiarity to their combat.
I have your measure NOW.
It is almost as if they have fought before.
He feels no sense of triumph as his enemy falls.
Will you yield now?
Yield?
I would die a THOUSAND deaths before I yield to the likes of you.

SO BE IT.
AND THEN AGAIN, THE SENSATION OF FAMILIARITY.
THAT PENDANT...
THE CERTAINTY THAT THEY HAVE MET BEFORE.
BUT WHY SHOULD THAT KNOWLEDGE FILL HIS SOUL WITH SUCH DREAD?

WHO ARE YOU?
THEY CALL ME SCOURGE.
BUT THAT IS NOT MY TRUE NAME.
I'VE SEEN ENOUGH. RETURN TO ME, MY WARRIOR.
NO MY QUEEN. I HAVE FAILED YOU.
LET HIM KILL ME!
LET ME DIIIEEEE

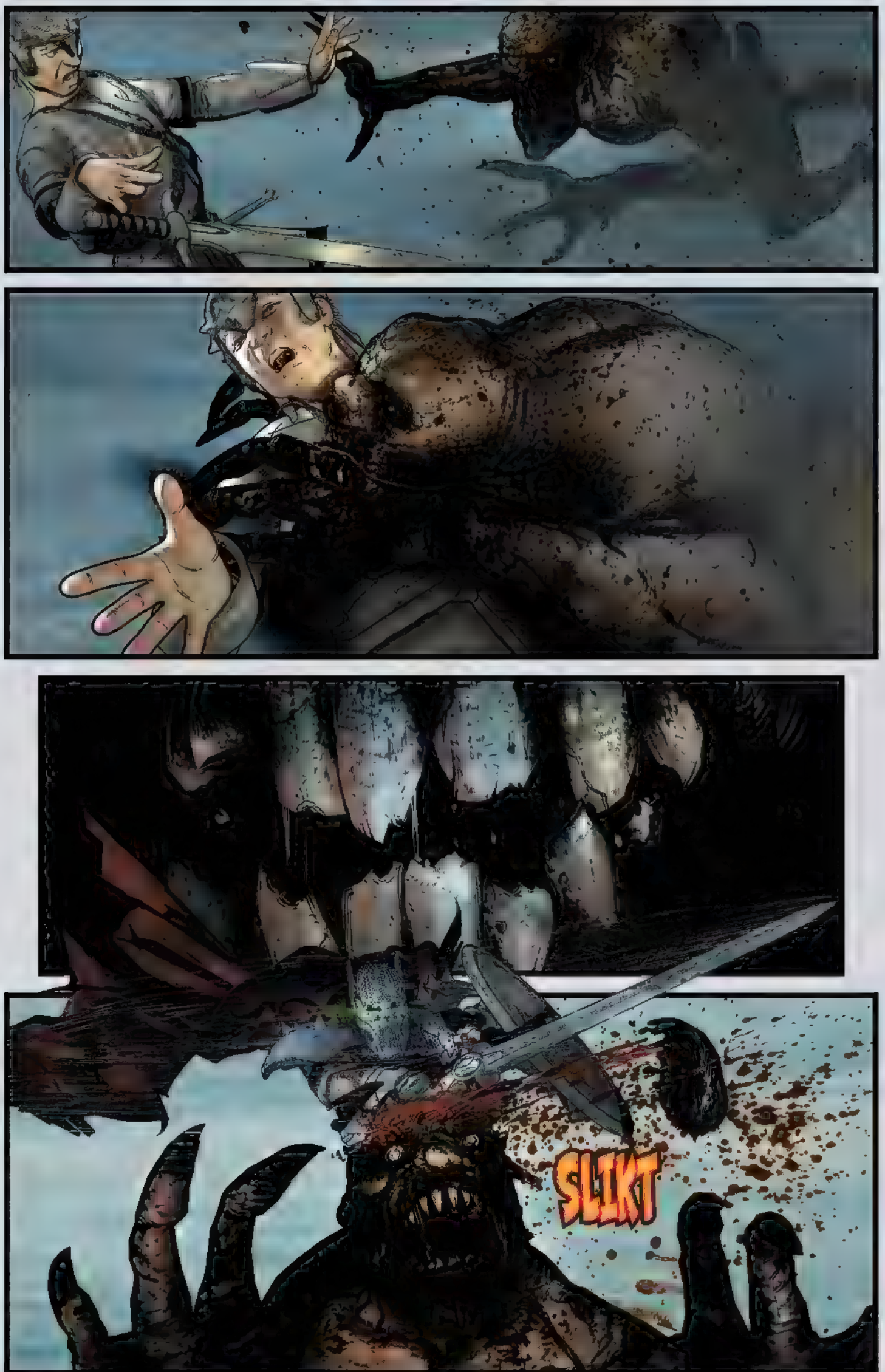
MY LIEGE, WHAT ORDERS DO YOU HAVE FOR YOUR ARMY?
THEY WOULD FOLLOW YOU TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH.
NO, NOT SO FAR AS THAT.
IT IS MANY YEARS SINCE I LAST SAW MY WIFE, QUEEN RIELLE. YOUR LORE-KEEPER SAYS THAT SHE HAS NEVER LEFT THE CASTLE SINCE I DEPARTED.
I MUST KNOW HER FATE.
WE ARE GOING TO CASTLE VALON.
THE PATH TO THE CASTLE IS TREACHEROUS, MY LORD. IT LEADS THROUGH THE BLEAKEST OF THE DARK LANDS AND IS PLAGUED BY MONSTERS.
THEN I PRAY SOME MIRACLE HAS KEPT HER SAFE.

I SWEAR THESE BRANCHES ARE GROWING BEFORE MY EYES.
HE'S RIGHT! THE TREES ARE ALIVE.
Haa!
IT'S ONLY A SNAKE.
THAT'S NO ORDINARY SERPENT. I SAW IT GROW OUT OF THE BRANCH OF THAT TREE.
THIS PLACE IS BEWITCHED.
KEEP MOVING!


THE ORDER COMES TOO LATE FOR SOME
MY LORD! HELP US!
FAR TOO LATE
BEWARE, LORD VALON, THEY ARE NOT NATURAL CREATURES.
NEITHER AM I, OWAIN.

SHUNK
THOSE THINGS ARE EVERYWHERE.
OWAIN WAS RIGHT, THIS LAND IS INFESTED WITH FOUL SORCERY.
EVEN THE AIR IS THICK AND CLOGS THE MIND.
I WOULD SWEAR WE HAVE BEEN TRAVELING FOR MANY HOURS YET THE CASTLE IS NO CLOSER.
THESE THINGS WILL PICK US OFF ONE BY ONE. I WILL NOT SACR.FICE MY ARMY TO NO PURPOSE.
YOU MUST RETURN TO CAMP.
I WILL CONTINUE ALONE.

WHY ARE YOU STILL HERE, OWAIN?
A SQUIRE DOES NOT ABANDON HIS LORD.
MY FATE IS TO SERVE YOU.
THE TIME WILL COME WHEN YOU WILL NEED ME AT YOUR SIDE.
YOU ARE TREMBLING. ARE YOU AFRAID?
WHEN I SAW MY COUSIN ARN DIE... THEN I WAS AFRAID.
I WANTED TO RUN, TO HIDE...
...NOW I HAVE FOUND MY COURAGE.


SLIKT

It will not be the last time that the knight's squire comes close to death, nor the last time he is afraid...
But it will be the last time that fear overcomes him.
I'm sorry. I-
There is no shame in feeling fear. The truly courageous are those who face their fear and do not run.
Come, we have many leagues to travel.

THE NORTHLANDS.
WHERE ARE YOU OFF TO IN SUCH A HURRY?
I HAVEN'T TOLD YOU WHICH PATH TO TAKE.
THIS IS THE WAY.
ARE YOU SURE?
I JUST...FEEL IT. I KNOW EXACTLY WHERE I'M GOING.
THE QUESTION IS...
...CAN YOU FOLLOW ME, OLD MAN?

THERE IT IS. THAT CASTLE IS WHERE WE'LL FIND WHATEVER THIS MAD QUEST IS LEADING US TO.
YOU'RE RIGHT. BUT HOW DO YOU KNOW?
THIS GAUNTLET, THE WITCHBLADE... IT SEEMS TO SPEAK TO ME...
...AND IT'S TELLING ME THAT WE HAVE TO REACH THE CASTLE.
THIS FOG! I CAN BARELY SEE MY HAND IN FRONT OF MY FACE.
FOG? WHAT FOG?
OH, VERY F-
SQUAWWWK
WHAT IS IT, RAZORBEAK?
SOMETHING'S COMING!

SQUAWK!

STARLING HAS NEVER HAD TO FIGHT BEFORE EXCEPT FOR THE OCCASIONAL FISTICUFFS WITH RIVAL RAGAMUFFINS.

SQUABBLES OVER A LOAF OF BREAD OR A STOLEN PURSE

THE MOST SHE HAS RISKED IS A FEW SCRATCHES OR BRUISES.

NOW SHE IS FIGHTING FOR HER VERY LIFE...

AND DOING IT AS IF SHE WAS BORN FOR NOTHING ELSE!

THERE ARE TOO MANY. WE NEED TO FIND A PLACE WE CAN DEFEND.

OVER THERE!

WHAT IS IT?
SOME KIND OF CHURCH.
IF WE CAN GET INSIDE, MAYBE WE CAN HOLD THEM OFF.

KLOOMP

MUCH AS I ADMIRE YOUR MASTERY OF THE WITCHBLADE...
...I SUGGEST NEXT TIME YOU COULD JUST OPEN THE DOOR SO WE CAN CLOSE IT BEHIND US.

ANY IDEAS FOR GETTING US OUT OF HERE?
THIS WAY!

THIS LOOKS LIKE A CRYPT, BUT I'M NOT SEEING A WAY OUT.
DID YOU HEAR ME, OLD TIMER?
WE NEED AN EXIT!
LET ME CLEAR MY MIND, FOCUS...
AAK!
THERE'S A PASSAGE HERE.
THEN LET'S GO, BECAUSE THE DEAD IN THIS PLACE ARE DECIDEDLY RESTLESS, NOT TO MENTION HOSTILE.

GO! I'LL HOLD THEM OFF.
YOU'RE LOOKING TIRED OLD MAN. LET ME HOLD THEM OFF WHILE YOU RUN.
YOU'RE RIGHT, MY POWERS ARE EBBING. IT'S MY BAD KARMA. I'VE BEEN TOO SELFISH OF LATE.
KHAR-MAH? WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?
IT'S COMPLICATED. IF I SHOW COWARDICE BY RUNNING, MY POWERS WILL DIMINISH.
IF I STAY AND FIGHT, MY SACRIFICE WILL SWING THE BALANCE IN MY FAVOR AND MY KARMA WILL COME BACK TO ME.
THAT DOESN'T SOUND LIKE ANY MAGIC I EVER—
JUST DO WHAT I SAY.
GO!

I HAVEN'T TRIED THIS FOR A WHILE.
THE TWO-FINGERED PATH TO ENLIGHTENMENT.
THE BLOWING OUT OF THE CANDLE.
THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE VOID
THE FIRST FINGER TO PARALYZE THE BODY
THE SECOND TO EXPAND THE MIND.
YOU'VE STILL GOT IT, SEA HAWK, YOU OLD DEVIL!
YOU THINK HIS KHAR-MAH CAME BACK?

OKAY, RAZORBEAK, THERE HAS TO BE A WAY OUT OF HERE.
Tweet
SOMETHING WRONG WITH THE AIR IN HERE. THERE'S A WEIRD SMELL.
NEED TO KEEP MOVING. I JUST...
...CAN'T GET MY BREATH...
...FEEL REALLY WEIRD...

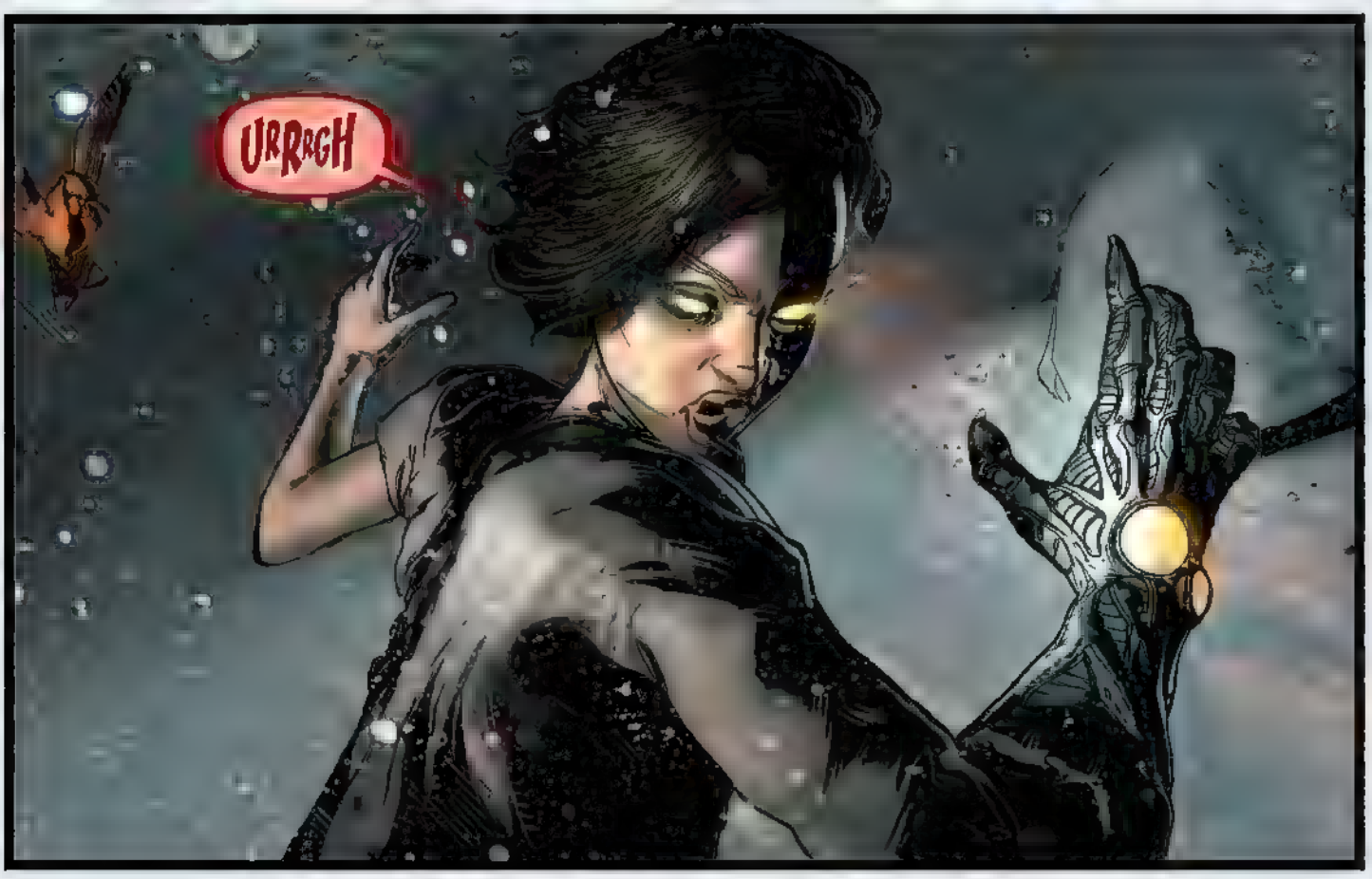
WELCOME STARLING...
MOTHER? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
WHO'S THAT WITH YOU?
YOUR GRANDMOTHER, YOUR GREAT GRANDMOTHER, HER MOTHER.
THESE ARE ALL YOUR MOTHERS, ALL WISE WOMEN, AS I WAS, AS YOU WILL BE...

...ALL DEAD BY THE HANDS OF MEN...
...MEN WHO HATED AND FEARED THEM FOR THEIR CRAFT...
...MEN WHO WILL ALWAYS FEAR A WOMAN WHO WIELDS POWER...

THEY WILL FEAR YOU MORE THAN ANY OF US, MY BELOVED DAUGHTER...
...BECAUSE YOU HOLD THE GREATEST POWER OF THEM ALL...
...YOUR FUTURE LIES WITH YOUR SISTERS IN A NEW, MORE PERFECT WORLD THAT IS TO COME...
...IF YOU WOULD TAKE YOUR RIGHTFUL PLACE ALONGSIDE THEM, YOU MUST NOT TRUST THE SILKEN WORDS OF MEN...
...SWEET, POISONOUS WORDS TO SEDUCE YOU AND WEAKEN YOU SO THAT THEY CAN DESTROY YOU...
THAT IS WHY YOU MUST STRIKE FIRST, WITHOUT WARNING OR MERCY...

GREETINGS, DAMSEL.
IT'S A PLEASANT CHANGE TO COME UPON ANOTHER OF OUR OWN SPECIES.

CAREFUL, MILORD. NOTHING IN THIS PLACE IS WHAT IT APPEARS.


URRGH

RAAARGH!
NO! WHAT ARE YOU-?
YOU DON'T FOOL ME WITH YOUR FRIENDLY WORDS.
!

I AM NOT OF YOUR SPECIES, TRICKSTER! I AM A WOMAN!
I AM THE WITCHBLADE!
TO BE CONTINUED

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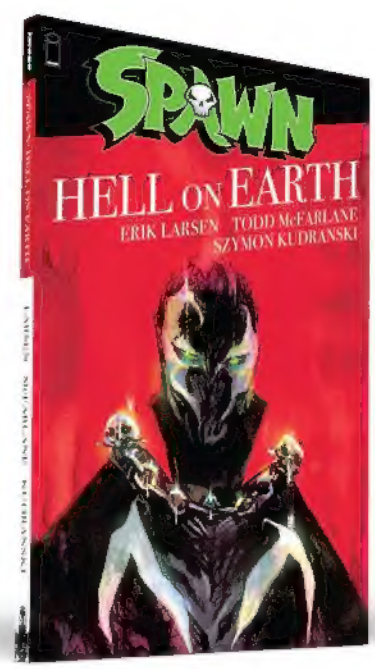
DEMON'S DAYS ARE NUMBERED.

Killed by his own men, Government Agent Al Simmons struck a deal with the devil, resurrecting him from the depths of hell. Returning to Earth he guards the forgotten alleys of New York City as the warrior Spawn, a hero unlike any other. Seeking answers about his past, Spawn grapples with the dark forces that returned him to earth, battling enemies and discovering unlikely allies.

Even though the doors of Heaven and Hell are now locked,there's enough evil on Earth to keep Spawn busy. But without his full powers, Spawn will have to find a way to fight his enemies without getting himself killed again in *Spawn: Hell on Earth*. Featuring the kinetic art and imaginative story-telling of Image Comics founders **Todd McFarlane** (*Spawn, Spider-Man, The Incredible Hulk*) and **Erik Larsen** (*Savage Dragon, Spider-Man*), as well as veteran *Spawn* artist **Szymon Kudranski**, this is one collection you don't want to miss!

The *Spawn: Hell on Earth* trade paperback collects 12 issues – a whole year's worth – of this fan-favorite story into one thick volume. All at a hard to beat price.



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SON OF ULTRON